



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

## United States Sees Chance for National Reconciliation in Somalia

By David Shelby  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – The transitional Somali government's December 28 seizure of control over the Somali capital Mogadishu offers "an historic opportunity for the Somali people to achieve a broad-based, inclusive government," the U.S. ambassador to Kenya said December 29.

With the assistance of the Ethiopian military, forces from the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI), as Somalia's provisional government is known, drove out Islamic Courts Union (ICU) militants, who have controlled the capital since June.



*A Somali woman holds Somalia's flag in Kismayu, Tuesday, Jan 2, 2007. (AP Photo)*

In a December 29 statement, Ambassador Michael Ranneberger praised TFI President Abdullahi Yusuf for his pledge to engage in dialogue "with all segments of the society, including the busi-

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Nation Pays Tribute to Ford at U.S. Capitol

By Howard Cincotta  
USINFO Special Correspondent

Washington -- On a cool winter night punctuated by the salute of cannon and the piping of a Navy bosun's whistle, former President Gerald R. Ford returned to Washington for the last time, December 30, to lie in state beneath the spacious dome



*President Gerald R. Ford*

of the Capitol Rotunda for two days before a national memorial service that will take place Tuesday, January 2, 2007.

Ford, 38th president of the United States from 1974 to 1977, died December 26 at his home in Rancho Mirage, California. He was 93.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### AFRICAN NEWS

Sudan Must Implement Peace Plan by End of 2006, U.S. Envoy Says (P 4)

Former U.S. Diplomat to Head China-Africa Relations Research Project (P 5)

### AMERICAN NEWS

President Ford Served When America "Needed Him Most," Bush Says (P 6)

World Leaders Remember Former U.S. President Gerald Ford (P 7)

"American Original" James Brown Inspired Many (P 8)

U.S. Population Hits 301 Million (P 10)

### INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Bush Receives Iraq Briefing, Cites "Good Progress" on New Plan (P 11)

Saddam Received Justice He Denied Others, Bush Says (P 12)

Rice Supports Palestinian Efforts To Resolve Political Crisis (P 13)

### HEALTH AND SCIENCE

Three People Dead in Egypt, Raising Human Avian Flu Toll to 157 (P 14)

NASA Rovers, Mars Orbiter Changing Understanding of Mars (P 15)

## Nation Pays Tribute to Ford at U.S. Capitol . . .

*(Continued from page 1)*

At the Capitol, where Ford served for a quarter century as a Michigan congressman and leader of the Republican minority in the House of Representatives, his casket was placed atop the pinewood bier that first held the coffin of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865.

In one of several eulogies delivered in the Rotunda, Vice President Dick Cheney, who served as Ford's chief of staff in the White House, said:

"It was this man, Gerald R. Ford, who led our republic safely through a crisis that could have turned to catastrophe.... America was spared the worst. And this was the doing of an American President. For all the grief that never came, for all the wounds that were never inflicted, the people of the United States will forever stand in debt to the good man and faithful servant we mourn tonight."

Ford's body was flown to Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington, accompanied by his wife Betty, 88, and members of the Ford family, following memorial services in California.

As night fell, the plane was met by dignitaries who had served in the Ford administration. Along with Cheney, they included former secretaries of state Henry Kissinger and James Baker, former head of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan, former Transportation Secretary William Coleman, and former De-

fense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

The motorcade from Andrews Air Force Base drove to the U.S. Capitol via Alexandria, Virginia, where Ford lived during his years in the House of Representatives.

rier in the Pacific during World War II, and is the only president who advanced to the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America.

Sometimes described as an



*Members of the Ford family, left, and President George Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, former President Jimmy Carter and their wives, right, watch as the casket of former President Gerald R. Ford is carried by a military honor guard during a memorial service at the National Cathedral in Washington, Tuesday, January 2.*

In downtown Washington, the motorcade then paused at the World War II memorial on the Washington Mall, according to news accounts, where Navy Chief Boatswain's Mate Carlos Ribbot of Puerto Rico, played the three traditional notes on a boatswain's pipe to honor Ford's military service. A group of local Boy Scouts gathered at the memorial saluted the motorcade as well.

Ford served as a navigator and gunnery officer aboard an aircraft car-

"improbable president," Ford served as a member of Congress for 25 years, rising to the position of Republican minority leader in the House of Representatives until President Richard Nixon nominated him as vice president following the resignation of Spiro Agnew. In August 1974, Ford became president following the resignation of Nixon as a result of the Watergate scandal. He lost a closely contested election contest to Democratic Party nominee Jimmy Carter in

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## United States Sees Chance for National Reconciliation in Somalia . . .

(Continued from page 1)

ness community, representatives of civil society, religious figures, and clan elders, among others.” He said the future of U.S.-TFI relations would depend on the transitional government’s willingness to work for national reconciliation.

Somalia has not had an effective central government since the 1991 overthrow of former President Mohamed Siad Barre. The TFI was formed in 2004 in Nairobi, Kenya, and moved to the Somali city of Baidoa in 2005, but Mogadishu remained under the control of rival warlords until the ICU seized the

city in June.

The ambassador urged all Somalis to use this opportunity for achieving national unity. “All Somalis have a role to play in the future of Somalia, except those who are committed to terrorism and violence,” he said. “Warlordism and clannism have no role to play in the future of a modern Somali state. Mogadishu should remain a free and open city, accessible to all regardless of clan affiliation.”

According to press reports, Ethiopian officials have pledged to withdraw their troops from Somalia in the coming weeks and turn over

control to African Union forces. The ambassador voiced U.S. support for the deployment of African Union peacekeeping forces as expeditiously as possible.

The United States also pledged to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance to Somalia.

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦*

## Nation Pays Tribute to Ford at U.S. Capitol . . .

(Continued from page 2)

1976. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061227070542jatia0.052746> ).)

Ford joins a number of other U.S. presidents who have lain in state beneath the Capitol Rotunda, including Ronald Reagan, Dwight Eisenhower, Herbert Hoover, Warren G. Harding, William Howard Taft, William McKinley and James Garfield.

Ford will lie in state at the U.S. Capitol for two days, allowing the

public an opportunity to pay their respects.

The memorial service on Tuesday, January 2, 2007, which will be attended by President Bush and much of official Washington, will take place at the Washington National Cathedral, a soaring Gothic building that has been the site of many prayer and memorial services with a national focus. Later, Ford will be flown to Grand Rapids, Michigan, for a private burial service on Wednesday, January 3, 2007, on the grounds of the Gerald Ford Presidential Library.

The full text ( <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/>

[releases/2006/12/20061230-1.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061230-1.html) ) of Cheney's remarks is available on the White House Web site.

For more information, see Gerald R. Ford: A Tribute ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Gerald\\_Ford\\_A\\_Tribute.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Gerald_Ford_A_Tribute.html) ).

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦*



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## Sudan Must Implement Peace Plan by End of 2006, U.S. Envoy Says

By Kathryn McConnell  
USINFO Staff Writer

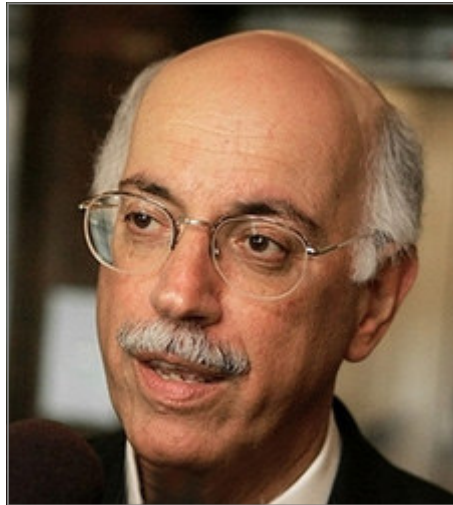
Washington -- If Sudan does not implement fully a negotiated Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) for Darfur by the end of 2006, the United States will embark on another strategy to bring relief to the many innocent people in the region who are suffering as a result of ongoing hostilities, says U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan Andrew Natsios.

Briefing reporters December 20 at the State Department, Natsios said he hopes to meet soon with incoming U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to ensure there is a unified international message to Sudan to accept the presence of a new "hybrid" international peacekeeping force to provide stability and allow humanitarian efforts to resume in the country's western Darfur region.

The U.N. Security Council agreed December 19 on the deployment of a hybrid force -- expected to consist of 20,000 troops and police officers from both the United Nations and the African Union (AU) -- to strengthen efforts of the existing African Union force in the region. The mandate of the current African Union force in Darfur ends on January 1, 2007.

Returning from a week in Sudan, Natsios said he had useful meetings with President Omar al-Bashir, presidential adviser and Sudan Liberation Movement leader Minni Minnawi and other senior Sudanese officials.

He stressed the urgency of implementing U.N. agreements to reduce violence in Darfur and of establishing a cease-fire commission that



Andrew Natsios

would include non-CPA signatory rebel groups.

The United States, the leading donor of food aid and humanitarian assistance to Sudan, needs the international community to tell Sudan that "in no uncertain terms" it must act to protect its civilians and make it possible for aid workers to reach people in need, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in an interview December 18.

"The time has come for the Khartoum government to accept the help the international community is trying to give it," Rice said.

Natsios said he expects Sudan to accept a presidential statement submitted to the United Nations reaffirming the U.S. commitment to the peace agreement.

He also praised China for its efforts to advance negotiations for peace in Sudan, which has large, unexplored oil reserves. However, Natsios said, the U.S. interest in the region is not oil, but to see that human rights and humanitarian standards are upheld.

Natsios said he welcomed Sudan's two-year extension of an accelerated procedure that allows nongovernmental organizations and U.N. aid workers to get into Darfur.

He also said he has offered to be an "intermediary" between Sudan and neighboring Chad. Rising violence in Darfur, which borders Chad, is spilling over into Chad, endangering its citizens and threatening to destabilize a larger area.

For a peace agreement in Darfur to be successful, Natsios said, militant groups will have to be disarmed. Because of violence in the region he did not meet with any rebel leaders as he had planned, he added.

Natsios said he was pleased with the recent appointment of Jan Eliasson, former Swedish foreign minister, as a U.N. special envoy for Darfur to deal with the humanitarian and security crisis. Eliasson, who was president of the 60th U.N. General Assembly, will assume his duties at the beginning of 2007. His main task will be to "work the diplomatic channels" outside Sudan to encourage governments to remain engaged in the issue, said outgoing Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Natsios said he plans to return to Sudan in January 2007 but that details of that trip will be determined by what happens by January 1, 2007.

For further information on U.S. policy, see Darfur Humanitarian Emergency ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/darfur.html> ).

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)* ♦

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## Former U.S. Diplomat to Head China-Africa Relations Research Project

By Jim Fisher-Thompson  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn will travel to Beijing in January 2007 to study China-Africa relations and their effect on U.S. foreign policy.

After his initial visit, the adjunct professor at George Washington University's (GWU) Elliott School of International Affairs will be joined by a GWU research team in China to discuss global issues with its counterpart in the Chinese foreign-policy community, he told USINFO December 29.

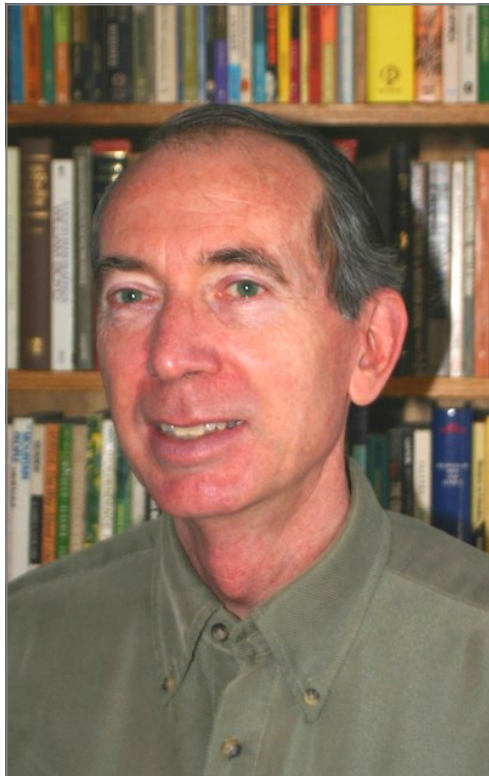
Shinn said he is collaborating with Joshua Eisenman, a Mandarin speaker pursuing a doctorate in Chinese studies at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). The research project is being financed by a private family foundation with support from the American Foreign Policy Council (AFPC) to study China-Africa relations.

### RIGHT TIME FOR A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

According to Shinn, the AFPC believes the time is right for a comprehensive study of China's policies, strategies and goals in Africa. The study will inform policymakers and the general public and are aimed at increasing mutual understanding, Shinn said.

"More dialogue between Americans and Chinese regarding their respective countries' policies in Africa will reduce the possibility for confusion and diminish the chances of miscalculations based on misguided or incomplete analysis of respective interests and intentions," he said.

Following their work in China, Shinn said, "Josh [Eisenman] and I will make a monthlong visit to six African countries to complete the overseas part of our China-Africa study." The end result will be "a book, a policy paper, probably some articles, and a one-day conference on the subject in Washington."



*Former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia  
David Shinn*

The diplomat turned scholar recently touched on some of the project's issues in a speech on China-Africa relations and their effect on U.S. interests. Shinn delivered the address in early December at the 2006 Oxford-Uehiro-Carnegie Council Conference in New York City.

"It is important to understand that China today enjoys a generally good reputation in Africa in nearly all aspects of its interaction, including trade and investment," Shinn told

his audience. China is now Africa's third-largest trading partner after the United States and France with trade between Africa and China reaching \$40 billion in 2005 and projected to rise to \$100 billion by 2010, he said.

African states find relations with China attractive, in part, because "there is no colonial baggage," Shinn said. "In some cases, especially in southern Africa, there are close Chinese ties going back to solidarity with national liberation movements. The Africans perceive China as a developing country -- albeit one with a seat on the U.N. Security Council -- which seeks to build south-south relationships."

On the Chinese side, Shinn said that nation "sees itself as a global power and leader of the developing world. For both political and economic reasons, it wants to cultivate good relations with the 53 nations in Africa."

### SEEING CHINA FROM AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

Although many in the West view China's nonchalant attitude toward human rights in Africa as troublesome, it is important to see it from the African perspective, Shinn said.

For example, he said Sierra Leone's ambassador to China recently summed up the position of many Africans on China's role in Africa when he said: "The Chinese are doing more than the G8 [Group of Eight nations] to make poverty history. If a G8 country proposes a project for Sierra Leone, there is an environmental assessment and evaluation of the human rights and

*(Continued on page 12)*

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## President Ford Served When America “Needed Him Most,” Bush Says

Former President Gerald R. Ford, who passed away December 26, was “a man of integrity and selfless dedication,” and was there for the United States “when we needed him most,” President Bush said.

Speaking in his radio address to the American public December 30, Bush said there has been “an outpouring of grief and affection” across the nation for the former president who achieved his position “without ever seeking the office” in 1974.

“Providence gave us Gerald Ford’s steady hand and calm leadership during a time of great division and turmoil. He guided America through a crisis of confidence, and helped our Nation mend its wounds by restoring faith in our system of government,” Bush said.

The president said Ford’s long life “took him from the football fields of his boyhood in Michigan to the halls of power in Washington, D.C.,” and at every stage along the journey “he displayed a decency, patriotism, and courage that Americans will always admire.”

Following is the transcript of the president’s radio address:

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
(Crawford, Texas)  
Saturday, December 30, 2006  
RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This week, as Americans prepare to welcome a new year, we do so with heavy hearts and fond memories of our 38th President, Gerald R. Ford. We mourn the passing of a courageous leader, a true gentleman, and a loving father and hus-

band. On behalf of all Americans, Laura and I send our prayers and condolences to Mrs. Ford and the entire Ford family.

Gerald Ford was a great man who devoted the best years of his long life to public service. He fought for

decency; and the following August, he became President of the United States without ever seeking the office. Providence gave us Gerald Ford’s steady hand and calm leadership during a time of great division and turmoil. He guided America through a crisis of confidence, and



*President George W. Bush delivers the eulogy for former President Gerald R. Ford during the State Funeral service at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2007. White House photo by Eric Draper*

his country during World War II. After returning home, he won the first of 13 elections to the United States Congress. The people of Michigan admired his dedication and decency, and so did his fellow members of Congress. Gerald Ford rose to become a leader of his party, and he earned the respect and good will of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Gerald Ford always believed in the importance of answering the call to duty, and he was there for the Nation when we needed him most. In December 1973, he accepted the responsibilities of the Vice Presi-

helped our Nation mend its wounds by restoring faith in our system of government.

In his two-and-a-half years as President, Gerald Ford distinguished himself as a man of integrity and selfless dedication. He always put the needs of his country before his own, and did what he thought was right, even when those decisions were unpopular. Only years later would Americans come to fully appreciate the foresight and wisdom of this good man.

In recent years, Americans have

*(Continued on page 17)*



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## World Leaders Remember Former U.S. President Gerald Ford

By Lauren Monsen  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Heads of state from around the world are offering tributes in memory of former U.S. President Gerald R. Ford, who died December 26 at age 93 in Rancho Mirage, California.

During Ford's brief presidency (August 9, 1974 – January 20, 1977), he "provided calm leadership and healing to a nation troubled by [domestic] ... and international challenges," said Australian Prime Minister John Howard in a prepared statement.

Ford served as the United States' 38th president after his predecessor, Richard Nixon, resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Many historians have hailed Ford as a stabilizing influence at a time of great national turmoil.

Because he was instrumental in helping his country move past the trauma of the Watergate era, "President Ford will be remembered as a forthright and decent man who safely guided the United States of America in troubled times," Howard added.

French President Jacques Chirac, in his letter of condolence to President Bush, described Ford as a "great statesman who, after a long congressional career, was -- in difficult circumstances -- called on in 1974 to assume the highest responsibilities and to embody national unity." Chirac also cited Ford's "great moral qualities and his political courage."

Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a message of condolence to Bush, as well. "We remember [Ford] as a major political leader

who made a considerable personal contribution to the development of mutually beneficial dialogue and consolidation of bilateral relations," he said.

In a letter of condolence to Bush from Hungarian President László Sólyom, the Hungarian leader said that Ford's death "is a great loss to the American people and [to] all of us who have appreciated his integrity and the substantial achievements of his long political career."

Sólyom went on to praise Ford's support for initiatives that eventually led to political reform in Central Europe. "We in Hungary remember Gerald R. Ford above all as the U.S. president who signed the Helsinki Accord, which paved the way for the long process of democratic changes and respect for basic human rights in our region," he said. "While facing an extremely difficult domestic agenda, President Ford was an internationalist in foreign affairs convinced of the need for an active American role abroad."

An unofficial translation of the condolence letter to Bush from South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun sounded a similar theme, reflecting on Ford's influence in world affairs. "President Ford will always be remembered with deep appreciation by the Korean people for his contribution to the promotion of world peace and freedom and his efforts to further peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula as well as to strengthen the ROK [Republic of Korea]-U.S. alliance," he said.

China's President Hu Jintao and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing also sent letters of condolence to Bush. "As a well-known American statesman, President Ford cared for and supported the development of [the]

China-U.S. relationship and made positive efforts for the improvement of relations between our two great nations," said the Chinese president. Both Hu and Li stated that "the Chinese people will forever cherish" the memory of Ford.

Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, in a letter to Ford's widow, saluted Ford's accomplishments as both a president and a legislator. "President Ford was a true public servant who gave outstanding leadership to the United States as president, when he displayed a deep sense of duty and commitment to his country and his citizens," Ahern wrote. "He was a man of conscience and courage whose distinguished service will be remembered and honored in the future."

Prior to Ford's tenure as president, "he served the people of the Fifth District of Michigan" for more than 25 years "and won many friends, on both sides of the aisle, though his work as a member of Congress," Ahern recalled. In public remarks quoted by the Associated Press on December 28, Ahern also said Ford was "a great man" who "will be greatly missed."

For additional information, see Gerald R. Ford: A Tribute ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Gerald\\_Ford\\_A\\_Tribute.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/is/Gerald_Ford_A_Tribute.html) ).

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦*

## "American Original" James Brown Inspired Many

By Stephen Kaufman  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Americans awoke on Christmas morning to learn that one of their cultural icons was gone, and tributes have been flowing ever since. Pioneering musician James Brown was a notoriously strict bandleader, yet he had a generous heart. The inventor of funk music, he was one of the most energetic stage performers until his death at 73 on December 25.

President Bush praised Brown as an "American original," who "enriched our culture and influenced generations of musicians." Todd Harris, who served as Brown's tour manager, said he represented "a piece of America" to his fans around the world. "Their faces almost looked like they were coming to see Abraham Lincoln or something," he recalled.

"My longevity comes from him. My ideas came from him, because I used to do every hip tune this man put out. ... He inspired me more than any other entertainer in the world," said musician Chuck Brown, 72, the "Godfather of Go-Go," who shared the stage several times with the "Godfather of Soul."

"I can talk about this man for years. ... He was my greatest inspiration throughout my whole musical career and make sure you print that!" Chuck Brown told USINFO.

### A DETAIL-ORIENTED BAND LEADER



Icon or not, James Brown was known as "the hardest working man in show business." Lisa White, booking manager at Washington's 9:30 Club, recalled "a very detail-oriented person" who, well after achieving international fame, continued to take an active role in his band. White remembered standing behind the club's soundboard while the band was going through its sound check for that night's performance.

"A lot of people that achieve that stature in their career, they don't bother to come to sound check ... but not James Brown," she told USINFO. "He was like the conductor rehearsing everybody through

their different parts and making them go over it ... until they got it right and calling people out for stuff that they weren't doing or that they should have done."

"It just impressed me how much he still cared about making sure that the performance he was going to give the people who bought the tickets to the show was going to be the best it could be," White said.

Brown, in his quest for excellence, was renowned for fining band members to punish poor performance. "One time ... one of the guys in his band did something wrong and he was like, 'Ha! You're paying me now!' or something like that. It was funny," White said.

Chuck Brown said he remembered seeing James Brown on stage when someone made a mistake. "He'd just raise his fingers. He'd raise two fingers. That means that's what you got, a \$200 fine, you know? He was very strict." But that band was "the tightest band in the world as far as I'm concerned."

### A LEGENDARY PERFORMER WITH A MISSION

James Brown was "a commanding presence on the stage," Lisa White said. "I mean, he's one of those people that when he walks on stage you just have to pay attention to him no matter what."

Brown's concerts "were almost like a combination of World Wrestling Federation [matches] and a Baptist

*(Continued on page 9)*



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## **"American Original" James Brown Inspired Many . . .**

*(Continued from page 8)*

church ceremony," tour manager Todd Harris told USINFO. "He'd always stop the show and tell everybody in the audience to turn to the person on their left and say hello and 'tell them that you love them,' and do the same thing on the right."

Brown performed all over the world, in Europe, Indonesia, Malaysia, the French Caribbean, China, and New Zealand, to name a few.

"He'd always bring a little piece of America to these different areas," Harris said, and he would bring people on stage wherever he went.

"There were little kids all the time in the front row. He would stop the show and bring them up onstage and have them dance. Overseas, in Japan, he has a whole fan club that comes dressed like him. He always brings those guys onstage," Harris said.

James Brown saw himself as an American cultural ambassador with a mission, Harris said. "It was much bigger than the music. And he'd stop and mention that to you. He'd always stop and tell people, 'this is bigger than you think. This is George Bush, this is politics, this is everything right here.'"

After tragic events such as the Asian tsunami or Hurricane Katrina, Brown routinely would stop the show in the middle to have a 30-second moment of silence. "He was always really into what was going on," Harris said.

Chuck Brown first saw the legend in 1957 at a small club where James Brown played a free show to assist the owner, who was having financial difficulties. James Brown "really took my heart," he said. "The energy that this man projects on the stage and the sound of his voice and the soul, the feeling that he gives you, you know?"

Among the many lessons Chuck Brown learned was "how to help people when they're down." James Brown's generosity did not extend only to club owners. "I've seen James on occasion helping people off the street," doing "more than he ever got credit for."

He was also a hero to many fellow African Americans, one of his most famous songs being "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud."

"He gave [African Americans] a lot of confidence in themselves," Chuck Brown said. "He taught me how to stay focused by listening to him and watching him, and taught me how to keep a strict direction on my band and on myself of course. I had to be tight in order for them to be tight."

Harris recalled James Brown's efforts to keep peace in the wake of the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, when riots were breaking out in major U.S. cities.

Brown asked that his concert that night in Boston be broadcast over the television networks "so that it would help curb some of the violence if everybody stayed home that night and watched him" in-

stead of taking their anger to the streets. It worked. Boston was the only major U.S. city that did not have riots that night.

### **JAMES BROWN "WILL ALWAYS BE A LEGEND"**

Asked about the legacy of James Brown, Harris said he "really changed the way music is looked at." Funk music began with Brown's song "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," when he "put an accent on the rhythm of the one as opposed to the two and four."

Brown's innovations marked the beginning of current rhythm and blues and rap. "There would not be any of it without what he started," Harris said.

"It's really like an Abraham Lincoln passed away. It's something much bigger than he is, what he left us."

James Brown "will always be a legend," Chuck Brown said. "He's just going to be around forever. It doesn't seem to me that he's gone."

Brown's final concert in Washington at the 9:30 Club on December 28, 2005, with Chuck Brown opening the show, can be heard courtesy of National Public Radio's All Songs Considered.

*(USINFO is produced by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦*

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## U.S. Population Hits 301 Million

By Carolee Walker  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – A steady stream of immigrants to the United States and moderate growth keep the U.S. population younger than other developed countries, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, which projects population in the United States on New Year's Day 2007 to be 301 million people.

Younger population growth keeps the economy and society vital, William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution in Washington, told USINFO. "With people coming into our country from around the world, as a population overall, we have become more open to new ideas," Frey said.

The U.S. population has been growing about 1 percent yearly since 1950, and nearly 40 percent of that growth is due to foreign-born individuals coming into the United States.

The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term "foreign born" to refer to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, or immigrants, refugees, students and illegal immigrants.

Many industrialized countries do not come close to having as many im-

migrants and young children of immigrants as the United States, according to Frey. As a result, with a fertility rate of just 1.1 per female in many industrialized countries, including in Japan and Europe, their populations are aging. The larger elderly segments of these societies place demands on health and social resources.

Just 12 percent of the U.S. population is over the age of 65, yet, Frey said, like all industrialized countries, the United States faces a rapidly aging population. That figure is expected to jump to 20 percent by the year 2025. Nearly 20 percent of Japan's population is already over the age of 65.

Frey said that an aging population, especially when it includes large numbers of people over age 85, can strain a country's economy. One trend that might slow economic problems caused by an aging population is an increasing tendency by older Americans to continue working after retirement age, either part time or in small businesses.

"Older Americans today want to stay mentally engaged," Frey said, "particularly women who are well-educated and are likely already in the labor force by the time they turn 65." For any number of reasons, some baby boomers, 78 million Americans born from 1946 to

1964, have to continue to work, Frey said. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=May&x=20060515142727berekellek0.6126673&t=livefeeds/wf-latest.html> ).)

According to the Census Bureau, in January 2007 the United States is expected to register one birth every eight seconds and one death every 11 seconds. Immigration to the United States is expected to add one person every 27 seconds. The result is an increase in the total population in the United States of one person every 15 seconds.

For more information about life in the United States, see U.S. Life and Culture ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life\\_and\\_culture.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture.html) ).

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)* ♦

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## Bush Receives Iraq Briefing, Cites “Good Progress” on New Plan

Washington -- Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Peter Pace traveled to Texas to brief President Bush on their recent trip to Iraq, and Bush said he will continue his consultations before announcing changes to U.S. policy in Iraq.

Speaking after their briefing at his ranch in Crawford, Texas, December 28 where he is spending the holidays, the president, accompanied by Vice President Cheney and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, said Gates and Pace “reported firsthand what they saw, [and] what they found,” and their report is an “important part of coming to closure on a way forward in Iraq.”

“[W]e’re making good progress toward coming up with a plan that we think will help us achieve our objective,” he said.

Bush said he would be speaking with Republican and Democratic members of Congress, and added that “success in Iraq is vital for our own security,” as well as an important part of the War on Terror.

The president said the “key to success” is an Iraqi government “willing to deal with the elements there that are trying to prevent this young democracy from succeeding.”



*President George Bush (2nd L) speaks after a meeting about U.S. military involvement in Iraq with members of his National Security team, on his Central Texas ranch in Crawford, Texas December 28, 2006. From L-R are: U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, Bush, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. REUTERS/Larry Downing*

“We want to help them succeed. And so we’ll continue to consult with the Iraqis,” he added.

As Bush continues to consult on Iraq with those beyond his national security team, the U.S. troop levels in Iraq are tied to the recommendations of U.S. military commanders in Iraq as well as the ongoing requirements voiced by the Iraqi government.

Defense Department officials maintain that the size of the U.S. deployment in Iraq is based on those recommendations and requirements. In mid-November, press reports estimated that there were between 140,000 and 152,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, and a similar number was

reported for October 2005.

The Pentagon announced December 27 that it planned to dispatch the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to the U.S. Central Command's (CENTCOM's) forward operating base in Kuwait at the start of 2007. The brigade's assignment puts it “on call” to respond to any emergency in the region identified by the CENTCOM commander, General John Abizaid.

The brigade replaces the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, which already had been called up and deployed from Kuwait to Iraq in support of the multinational force in Iraq.

For more information on U.S. policy in Iraq, see Iraq Update ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/iraq.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html) ).

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## Saddam Received Justice He Denied Others, Bush Says

Washington – The trial and execution of Saddam Hussein are testament to the determination of the Iraqi people to establish a nation governed by the rule of law, President Bush said in a statement from his ranch in Crawford, Texas.

"Saddam Hussein was executed after receiving a fair trial -- the kind of justice he denied the victims of his brutal regime," Bush said, noting that fair and open trials were "unimaginable" under his regime. "We are reminded today of how far the Iraqi people have come since the end of Saddam Hussein's rule," the president said.

Saddam was found guilty by the Iraqi High Tribunal of crimes against humanity for the 1982 killing of

approximately 160 men and boys in the Shiite town of Dujayl.

The Appellate Chamber of the Iraqi High Tribunal rejected Saddam's appeal on December 26, upholding his conviction and clearing the way for his execution. Under Iraqi law, a death sentence that has been upheld must be carried out within 30 days. Saddam executed on Saturday, December 30.

"Bringing Saddam Hussein to justice will not end the violence in Iraq," Bush said, "but it is an important milestone on Iraq's course to becoming a democracy that can govern, sustain, and defend itself, and be an ally in the War on Terror." (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/>

[display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061228151738esnam-fuak0.1005365](http://display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061228151738esnam-fuak0.1005365) ).)

The full text ( <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061229-15.html> ) of President Bush's statement can be found on the White House Web site.

For more information, see Iraq Update ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle\\_east\\_north\\_africa/iraq.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/iraq.html) ).

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## Former U.S. Diplomat to Head China-Africa Relations Research Project . . .

*(Continued from page 5)*

governance situation. The Chinese just come and do it. I'm not saying that it's right, just that Chinese investments are succeeding because they don't set high benchmarks."

The G8 comprises Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia.

Shinn said there was some friction in the relationship between China and some African nations. "At the grassroots level there seems to be growing anti-Chinese sentiment when large numbers of Chinese are employed on Chinese projects and as Chinese traders move increasingly into the African market. There are, for example, an estimated 30,000 Chinese migrants in Zambia and as many as 300,000 in South Africa," he said.

Even though the U.S. government views Chinese support for repressive regimes like Sudan and Zimbabwe as troubling, it does not regard Chinese investment in Africa as a threat.

In December 2005, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer traveled to Beijing for a "strategic dialogue" with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dai Bingguo, Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Lu Guozeng and Director General for Policy Planning Du Qiwen. (See related article ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/af/Archive/2005/Dec/07-44789.html> ).)

After those meetings, Frazer said she did not believe that "China's interest or engagement in Africa is in direct competition to the United States."

"I think China has as great a right to engage in Africa as any other country, [and] there is enough good to be done" on the continent," she stressed.

For more information on U.S. policy in the region, see Africa ( <http://usinfo.state.gov/af/> ).

The full text ( <http://www.gwu.edu/~elliott/news/transcripts/shinn.pdf> ) (PDF, 6 pages) of Shinn's remarks to the Oxford-Uehiro-Carnegie Council Conference is available through the George Washington University Web site.

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov> ) ♦*

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## Rice Supports Palestinian Efforts To Resolve Political Crisis

By David Shelby  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has thrown her support behind Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in his efforts to restore stability to the Palestinian Territories and resolve the political crisis between his Fatah Party and the ruling Hamas Party.

"The violence needs to stop," she told the cable news network Al Arabiya December 18. "But the political crisis also has to be resolved, and it needs to be resolved with the Palestinian people getting a government that can be acceptable internationally, so that the difficulties that have been there in terms of resources for the Palestinians can be resolved."

Tensions between Fatah and Hamas have grown increasingly lethal as economic conditions deteriorate in the territories as the result of an international aid embargo against the Hamas government. Hamas has refused to respect international demands that it recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce violence and adhere to previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Abbas attempted to create a national unity government that would comply with the international demands, but Hamas has refused to cooperate. Clashes between partisan militants became particularly

acute after Abbas announced December 16 that he would call for early elections to resolve the crisis. According to news reports, a one-day-old cease-fire between the two factions appeared to be holding December 20.



*Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice*

Rice offered support for Abbas's electoral initiative. "This is something that I think Palestinians will decide, but he is the Palestinian leader elected by his people as president. He has the will and the desire and, in fact, the obligation to help the Palestinian people find a way out of the crisis. And so we will support him as he tries to do that," she said.

During a December 19 roundtable discussion with Washington-based reporters, Rice said the current political impasse is not preventing the United States from actively engaging with the Palestinians. She said the United States is helping Abbas build up his security forces and sup-

porting Palestinian political institutions.

"We are going to continue to work with the presidency under any circumstances because we think the presidency is a responsible Palestinian voice," she said.

Rice said she sees a possible opening in the Middle East peace process, given the recent cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinians and following conciliatory statements from Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and she committed herself to pursuing that opening.

"It is something that would finally give to the Palestinian people the kind of dignity that they deserve," she said.

"We'll do everything we can to deliver as quickly as possible, but we need, of course, the parties themselves to be both

committed and to be effective in moving forward on their obligations."

Transcripts of Rice's interview with Al Arabiya ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/78003.htm> ) and her roundtable discussion ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/78052.htm> ) are available on the State Department Web site.

*(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦*

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## Three People Dead in Egypt, Raising Human Avian Flu Toll to 157

By Cheryl Pellerin  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington - Three members of an extended family have died in Egypt after being infected with H5N1 avian influenza, bringing the human toll in that nation to 18 cases and 10 deaths since February, and the total worldwide since 2003 to 261 cases and 157 deaths.

The Egyptian Central Public Health Laboratory said clinical specimens from the three cases tested positive for avian influenza (H5N1) virus, and the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 in Cairo, Egypt, detected the virus in specimens from two of the patients.

The samples have been sent to a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating center for testing and to characterize the virus.

"Our understanding is that there is exposure to sick poultry, in this case ducks, by the people that became ill," said John Rainford, a spokesman at WHO headquarters in Geneva, in a December 29 USINFO interview.

When a link is established between infected individuals and sick birds or very close human contact, Rainford added, "the concern level drops away from this being a virus that has mutated into something more dangerous than what we're seeing in many countries around the world, including Egypt, over the past several years."

Experts fear the virus could mutate into a form that is easily transmissible among people, initiating a pandemic that researchers estimate could kill millions of people, many in the developing world, and have dire

effects on social and economic systems.

### POULTRY-RELATED DEATHS

The Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population reported that all three deceased individuals came from a 33-member extended family in Gharbiyah province, 80 kilometers northwest of Cairo.

While being cared for at the country's designated avian influenza hospital, a 30-year-old woman, a



15-year-old girl and a 26-year-old man died. The most recent death occurred December 27.

News reports said the man and woman were siblings and the girl was their niece. All reportedly had contact with sick ducks.

The Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population and WHO are continuing to investigate the deaths and have initiated public health measures. The other family members remain healthy and are under close observation.

"That's an ongoing process we would expect to take a bit of time," Rainford said, "to make sure we have a full and broad understanding of how people may have been exposed, who else in the household may have been exposed and what kind of interactions they may have

had in the community. That will help the experts on the ground understand things better."

Avian influenza has reached more than 50 countries, and millions of chickens have died or been culled to prevent the spread of the virus to other poultry farms. Estimated related financial losses are in the tens of billions of dollars.

### WORLD BANK FLU GRANTS

The World Bank's Avian and Human Influenza (AHI) Facility announced December 28 that six grants with a total value of \$28 million have been approved to help 13 countries in five regions fight the threat posed by avian and human influenza.

The facility, a grant-making mechanism supported by the European Commission and seven other donors, helps countries implement action plans to reduce the social and economic impact of avian influenza and minimize the possible outbreak of a human flu pandemic.

"The bank is pleased that these grants are designed to foster intra-regional cooperation, given the emerging threats of trans-boundary animal health issues," said AHI Facility Administrator David Potten in a December 28 World Bank statement.

Vietnam will receive \$10 million to provide for early detection and response to human cases and to prepare for medical consequences of a possible human pandemic; Indonesia will receive \$10 million to reduce the amount of virus circulating in the environment and its possible mutation to a form easily transmissible among people.

*(Continued on page 17)*



## NASA Rovers, Mars Orbiter Changing Understanding of Mars

Washington – Newly released images from the Mars Global Surveyor offer the strongest evidence to date that water still flows on the Martian surface, and NASA's twin Mars rovers are nearing the third anniversary of their landings, operating nearly 12 times as long as their original missions of 90 Martian days (a Martian day is approximately 39.5 minutes longer than an Earth day).

The images, taken in 2004 and 2005, suggest water carried sediment through two gullies sometime during the past seven years. The images heightened intrigue about the potential for microbial life on Mars.

Elsewhere on the planet, NASA's long-lived robotic rover Opportunity achieved the long-held goal of reaching the massive Victoria

Crater, with the rover beginning to explore layered rocks in cliffs ringing the crater. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=October&x=20061006153244cmretrop0.552395> ).)

While Opportunity spent its first week at the crater, NASA's newest eye in the Martian sky, the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, photographed the rover and its surroundings. The new level of detail in the images from the orbiter will help guide the rover's exploration of the area. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=October&x=20061018114543lcnirellep0.9412042> ).)



*This is a portion of an image, called the "McMurdo Panorama," taken by the panoramic camera on the Spirit rover during its winter campaign. The view is looking toward the east, at "Tyrone," the light-toned soils exposed by the rover's wheels. The Tyrone area proved difficult for Spirit to get through, so the rover was commanded to traverse to "Low Ridge," the site of the winter campaign.*

### WATER ON MARS

Liquid water, as opposed to the water ice and water vapor known to exist on Mars, generally is considered necessary for life.

The atmosphere of Mars is so thin and the temperature so cold that liquid water at the surface would evaporate or freeze rapidly. Researchers propose that water could remain liquid long enough, after breaking out from an underground source, to carry debris downhill before freezing.

Mars Global Surveyor has discovered tens of thousands of gullies on slopes inside craters and other depressions on Mars. Dr. Michael Ma-

lin of Malin Space Science Systems in San Diego and his team of researchers first reported the discovery of the gullies in 2000, according to a December 6 announcement from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories (JPL).

That is the first evidence of newly deposited material apparently carried by fluids after earlier imaging of the same gullies. The two sites are inside craters in the Terra Sirenum and the Centauri Montes regions of southern Mars.

"These fresh deposits suggest that at some places and times on present-day Mars, liquid water is emerging from beneath the ground and briefly flowing down the

*(Continued on page 16)*

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## NASA Rovers, Mars Orbiter Changing Understanding of Mars ..

*(Continued from page 15)*

slopes," Malin said. "This possibility raises questions about how the water would stay melted below ground, how widespread it might be and whether there's a below-ground wet habitat conducive to life. Future missions may provide the answers."

Mars Global Surveyor began orbiting Mars in 1997. The spacecraft is responsible for many important discoveries. NASA has not heard from the spacecraft since early November, but attempts to contact it continue.

### THE OTHER MARS EXPLORERS

The Mars rovers, initially slated for three-month missions, continue to provide scientists with valuable data. Spirit, will begin its fourth year on Mars January 3, 2007; Opportunity on January 24, 2007. This unexpected longevity gives NASA a chance to field-test new capabilities useful to these and future rovers.

Along with their continuing scientific observations, the rovers are testing four new skills, instructions for which were included in revised flight software recently uploaded to their onboard computers. One capa-

bility lets spacecraft examine images and recognize certain kinds of features, like dust storms or clouds.

Another feature, "visual target tracking," allows a rover keep recognizing a designated landscape feature as the rover moves.

Visual target tracking can be combined with a third new feature -- autonomy in calculating where it is safe to reach out with the contact tools on the rover's robotic arm. The combination gives Spirit and Opportunity a capability called "go and touch" that is yet to be tested on Mars.

So far in the mission, when a rover drives to a new location, the crew on Earth has to evaluate images of the location to decide where the rover could put out its contact instruments on a subsequent day. After the new software is tested and validated, the crew will have the option of letting a rover choose an arm target for itself the same day it drives to a new location.

The new software also improves the autonomy of each rover for navigating away from hazards by building better maps of their surroundings. This is the most comprehensive of four revisions to the rovers' flight software since launch.

"This new software will be a baseline for development of flight software for Mars Science Laboratory," said John Callas, JPL project manager for the Mars Exploration Rovers, "but it's also helpful in operating Spirit and Opportunity." NASA's Mars Science Laboratory is a next-generation Mars rover in development for planned launch in 2009.

Over nearly three years, Spirit has driven 6.9 kilometers and Opportunity has driven 9.8 kilometers. Spirit has returned more than 88,500 images, Opportunity more than 80,700.

Images and additional information about the Mars rovers ( <http://www.nasa.gov/rovers> ) are available at the NASA Web site.

For more information on U.S. policy, see Science and Technology ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/global\\_issues/scitech.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/global_issues/scitech.html) ).

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**Three People Dead in Egypt, Raising Human Avian Flu Toll to 157**

*(Continued from page 14)*

Afghanistan will receive \$5 million to control infections among birds and domestic poultry and to prepare responses to possible human infection and related emergencies, and Tajikistan will receive \$1.5 million to minimize the threat to humans by highly pathogenic avian influenza infection and other animal diseases.

The Middle East Consortium on Infectious Disease Surveillance will receive \$500,000 to help facilitate information exchanges among Jordan, Israel and West Bank and Gaza; and \$500,000 will help strengthen the Southern Agricultural Council for Avian Flu Preparedness in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

More information ( <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/> "target = "\_blank" title = "http://www.pandemicflu.gov/" ) on U.S. and international efforts on avian influenza is available on a Web site of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For ongoing coverage of the disease and efforts to combat it, see Bird Flu (Avian Influenza) ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\\_issues/bird\\_flu.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html) "title = "http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\_issues/bird\_flu.html" ) .

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**President Ford Served When America "Needed Him Most," Bush Says . . .**

*(Continued from page 6)*

honored Gerald Ford with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Congressional Gold Medal, and the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award.

Through it all, Gerald Ford stayed true to the values that first led him to a life of public service, and he helped share that spirit with a future generation of leaders. He served as a mentor for Vice President Dick Cheney, former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan, and many others. He brought out the best in those around him, and in our whole Nation.

To the end, Gerald Ford never lost the spirit that Americans grew to admire so much. This spring, I

visited President and Mrs. Ford at their home in Rancho Mirage, California. At age 92, and battling health problems, he was still telling jokes and displaying the optimism that helped guide our Nation through some of its darkest hours.

Now America will stand with the members of the Ford family in the difficult hours and days ahead. Across the country, there has been an outpouring of grief and affection for President Ford. I've ordered flags to fly at half staff for 30 days in his honor. This weekend, his body will lie in state at the United States Capitol. And on Tuesday, Laura and I will join former Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Carter at a funeral service at the National Cathedral as part of a National Day of Mourning.

Gerald Ford's life spanned nine

decades, and took him from the football fields of his boyhood in Michigan to the halls of power in Washington, D.C. At every stage of his journey, he displayed a decency, patriotism, and courage that Americans will always admire. As we say goodbye to the year 2006, we bid farewell to one of the finest public servants America has ever known. We give thanks for the gift of his remarkable life, for the caring man who touched so many lives, and the wise President who helped heal our Nation.

May God bless Gerald R. Ford. Thank you for listening.

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